



# **TJIC Alert**

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## **Democracy**

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### **1. U.S.A. Elections in Brief**

International Information Programs

January 2012

92 p.

Full Text: [http://photos.state.gov/libraries/amgov/30145/publications-english/USA\\_Elections\\_InBrief.pdf](http://photos.state.gov/libraries/amgov/30145/publications-english/USA_Elections_InBrief.pdf)

This revised 2012 edition sketches the way primary and general elections work, not only the role of political parties, but also the nuts and bolts of voting machines and poll workers, opinion polls and campaign finance.

### **2. The Global Democracy Community Gets a Second Wind in Vilnius**

Ted Piccone

Brookings Institution

July 8, 2011

Full Text: [http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/0708\\_lithuania\\_piccone.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/0708_lithuania_piccone.aspx)

The vision of an international coalition of democracies committed to support democratic transition and consolidation worldwide took a step closer to reality this month in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, where hundreds of diplomats, parliamentarians, civil society activists and business leaders gathered for the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of the Community of Democracies. As the only global forum dedicated to fostering cooperation among the world's diverse democratic governments, the ten-year old Community of Democracies to date has been marked more by words than deeds. But a renewed sense of purpose by the Obama administration and the inspired leadership of newer democracies like Lithuania, Poland, Hungary and Mongolia, coupled with the unfolding promise of the Arab Spring, are yielding some interesting results. Progress is notable in at least three specific areas: democracy assistance, support to civil society, and governance reform of the body itself.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

### **3. Looking for Help: Will Rising Democracies Become International Democracy Supporters?**

Thomas Carothers and Richard Youngs

42 p.

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

July 12, 2011

Full Text: [http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/Rising\\_democracies\\_final.pdf](http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/Rising_democracies_final.pdf)

Rising democracies from the developing world have the potential to assist and revitalize international democracy support. Encouraging these countries to do more to support democracy abroad should be a priority, but it will not be easy, say the authors.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

### **4. Freedom of the Press Worldwide in 2011**

Reporters without Borders

2011

19 p.

Full Text: [http://www.rsf.org/IMG/CLASSEMENT\\_2011/GB/C\\_GENERAL\\_GB.pdf](http://www.rsf.org/IMG/CLASSEMENT_2011/GB/C_GENERAL_GB.pdf)

Several countries share first place in the index: Finland, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Norway and Iceland have always been among the countries sharing first position except in 2006 (Norway) and 2009 (Iceland). These six countries set an example in the way they respect journalists and news media and protect them from judicial abuse. They even continue to progress. Iceland, for example, is considering an exemplary bill, the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative (IMMI), that would provide a unique level of protection for the media. Sweden distinguishes itself by its Press Freedom Act, which has helped to create a particularly favourable climate for the work of journalists, by the strength of its institutions and by its respect for all those sectors of society including the media whose role in a democracy is to question and challenge those in positions of power.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

### **5. Promoting Democracy: The Whys and Hows for the United States and the International Community**

Mark Lagon

Council on Foreign

Relations

February 2011

Full Text: <http://www.cfr.org/democracy-promotion/promoting-democracy-whys-hows-united-states-international-community/p24090>

Mark Lagon examines the uneven history of promoting democracy in U.S. foreign policy and offers lessons for how the United States can best advance democracy today.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

### **6. On Overconfidence**

James Fowler, Dominic Johnson

Seed

January 7, 2011

Currently available online at [http://seedmagazine.com/content/article/on\\_overconfidence/](http://seedmagazine.com/content/article/on_overconfidence/)

The authors, instructors in political science at the University of California (San Diego) and Edinburgh University (Scotland), respectively, write that the human attribute of confidence is so essential for even the most everyday activities that we take it for granted. They note that it looms large to explain success of individuals in fields such as medicine, sports, entertainment and business; however, confidence, “like fire, can be extremely useful in controlled amounts, but confidence in excess – overconfidence – can easily burn out of control and cause costly errors.” Events such as the 2008 financial collapse, foot-dragging on climate change and disastrous outcomes of wars have been blamed on overconfidence. They note that most people have “positive illusions” about their abilities or vulnerability to risk. The authors write that the dilemma of overconfidence is that it confers success and advantage even at the cost of occasional disasters. Unbounded overconfidence, however, can lead to so much conflict that no gain would be worth it. They write that our decision-making abilities evolved over eons in small hunter-gatherer groups, and are not always attuned to our modern, complex societies. The good news, they

note, is that evolutionary reasoning suggests ways to avoid situations where overconfidence is likely to cause deleterious outcomes. Overconfidence can be encouraged in individual settings, such as entertainment or sports, but discouraged in situations where accurate assessment is more important, such as financial regulation, international conflict, climate change negotiations or mutual arms inspections. The authors conclude that “the modern world is very different from the one in which we evolved ... We may not be able to eliminate this bias in our decision-making, but it is crucial that we understand it and reset our institutions accordingly if we are to shake our long record of self-imposed disasters.”

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

## **7. Peaceplayers International: A Case Study On The Use Of Sport As A Tool For Conflict Transformation**

Brendan Tuohey, Brian Cognato  
Searcher

p. 51-63  
Winter-Spring 2011

The authors, both with PeacePlayers International (PPI), describe their organization’s approach to conflict transformation. PPI, which was founded in 2001, has helped over 50,000 young people overcome deep ethnic, religious or social divides in their communities through basketball. The authors have identified four key program components as integral to its success: local leadership; a balance between educational and sports content in programming; maintaining frequent, long-term contact; and structures for external leadership development. Over time, children can develop the shared histories that support true friendship, creating lasting relationships in the service of inter-communal reconciliation.

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